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Attributional Style, Aggression, Assertion and Passiveness in Battered and Nonbattered Women

BY

JENNIFER S. MACDONALD

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Counselling Psychology.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Edmonton

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Jennifer MacDonald

38 Warburton Drive
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
C1A 8Z6

Date: October 7, 1994

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitiled Attributional Style, Assertion, Aggression, and Passiveness in Battered and Nonbattered Women submitted by Jennifer S. MacDonald in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Counselling Psychology.

Dr. G. M. Kysela (Supervisor)

Dr. D. Sawatzky

Dr. B. Skrypnek

Date October 7, 1994

Abstract

In the last decade, battered women have received a great deal of attention from not only those employed in health professions, but also from the lay public. Many researchers and certainly the media have focused on battered women's experiences. Research in wife abuse has yielded some intriguing results that provide the foundation for the present investigation. The literature on wife abuse suggests that resource assistance and other tangible variables do not differentiate between battered women who leave their partners and those who remain in their violent relationships. These results suggest that resource assistance alone may ignore overpowering psychological states that influence battered women's decisions. Using the reformulation of the learned helplessness theory as a framework, the present study compared some psychological states of battered and nonbattered women.

The study had as its main goal to investigate the role of "causal attributions" and behaviour tendencies of women in relationship violence. Causal attributions refer to the process by which individuals explain and interpret events that occur in their lives. Thirty women, fifteen battered and fifteen nonbattered completed five questionnaires: the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire, the Interpersonal Behavior Survey, the Conflict Tactics Scale, the Beck Depression Inventory, and a Demographic questionnaire. First, it was predicted that battered women would more often indicate an attributional style that was internal, stable, and global than would nonbattered women. Second, it was predicted that battered women would be significantly more passive, more aggressive, and less assertive than nonbattered women. Third, it was predicted that passiveness would correlate positively with severe violence committed by the men against their partners.

The results of the study indicated that there does not appear to be a significant difference in general attributional style in battered and nonbattered women. Significant differences, however, did exist between the battered and nonbattered women in general assertion and passiveness. Examination of the results indicate that battered women are

more commonly passive and less assertive than nonbattered women. No difference was found in general aggression levels in battered and nonbattered women. However, differences in relationship specific aggression were significant. Battered women were significantly more aggressive with their partners than were nonbattered women. Severe violence did not correlate with passiveness or general aggression, but did correlate significantly (negative) with general assertion. The abuse history variable that best predicted group membership was childhood sexual abuse and the weakest predictors were physical or sexual abuse in earlier relationships. In addition, correlation results indicated that positive conflict resolution strategies used by one partner, were significantly related with those of the other partner.

The above results are discussed in relation to possible hypotheses for their occurrence. In addition the implications of these results and their application to domestic violence intervention programs are addressed and suggestions for future research are made.

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank several agencies and individuals who assisted me with this work. Without the contribution of so many volunteers, my advisors, my family, and my friends, completion of this project would have been impossible.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Interest in battering of women, at least in domestic violence, has been extensive in recent years. This interest can be attributed in part to changing cultural values and in part to social activists who seek reform in the manner in which society and its institutions respond to women who are abused by their partners. Current statistics on the incidence of family violence show that the number of reports have risen dramatically, but it is difficult to know if this is the result of heightened social awareness or an actual increase in domestic violence.

The 1985 National Family Violence Survey for American couples (Straus & Gelles, 1986, 1990) examined the rates for physical assaults between partners in married or cohabiting relationships and reported sixteen of every hundred couples as having experienced a violent incident during the year of the survey. If this statistic is accurate, an estimated 8.7 million couples in the United States experienced violence that year. Alarmingly however, violence statistics are hypothesized to be lower-bound estimates (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). Canadian statistics reveal an equally disturbing picture. MacLeod (1980) reported that ten percent of Canadian women suffer from physical abuse. In a more recent Canadian survey, Statistics Canada (1993) estimated that 25% of women in Canada had been the victims of spousal violence (physical) at some time in their lives. It seems obvious from these statistics, regardless of the methodological problems in attaining them and the discrepancies in findings, that battering of women is a significant social problem which affects a large segment of the population (Gelles, 1974; Walker, 1979; MacLeod, 1980; Straus & Gelles, 1986; MacLeod, 1987).

During the last 15-20 years, research in wife abuse has taken a rather traditional research path. Early research studies were exploratory in nature, estimating the incidence and prevalence of marital violence (Levinger, 1966;

Wolfgang, 1958) or presenting case analyses of wife abusers (Schultz, 1960; Snell, Rosenwald, & Robey, 1964). In the 1970s, the focus of marital violence research was largely on identifying psychological and sociological correlates of abuse, such as income insufficiency, drug or alcohol abuse, personal stress experience, and the effects of learning on shaping abusive behaviour. Recently, research on wife abuse has focused on the elaboration of psychological characteristics of abused women in an attempt to explain why abuse occurs or why particular women are abuse victims (Dutton, 1992). Concern, however, has been voiced about studying the psychological characteristics of battered women (Yllo, 1988) as these characteristics have been used to blame battered women for, among other things, allowing the abuse to occur, or for not stopping the abuse. In response to this concern, more recently battered women and their psychological characteristics have been studied as effects or responses to violence rather than as causes of violence (Douglas, 1987; Walker, 1979, 1984).

Researchers have commonly described two responses of women who are abused by their partners. Women often respond to abuse by becoming passive or by trying to escape the abuse. However, even among those who choose to escape the abuse, many return to their partners. Women's leaving patterns have often been charted to look similar to wave-like excursions in and out of the relationship (Limandri, 1987). Perreti and Buchanan (1978) reported that even among women who had chosen to escape abuse for the safety of shelters, as many as 60% returned to their relationships. Similarly Snyder and Fruchtman (1981) reported that six to ten weeks after leaving the shelter 60% of 119 women returned to their abusive relationships. These women were provided with tangible resources that would allow them to live independently yet they still returned to their abusive situations. These statistics suggest that resource assistance alone may ignore the overpowering psychological and social consequences suffered by victims of domestic violence.

Further research that investigates psychological characteristics of battered women is clearly warranted.

Statement of the Problem and Rationale

Probably one of the most common questions asked by the public and by researchers is "Why do women remain in abusive relationships?" Throughout the years, several theories have been postulated to help explain why women stay with their violent partners. Three main theoretical perspectives that strive to develop rationales for battered women accepting abuse, arise from the literature. First, the *psychological* stream suggests that abuse is "fulfilling masochistic needs of the wife...." (Snell, Rosenwald & Robey, 1964). Second, the *sociological* perspective suggests that wife battering serves as a device to maintain equilibrium in a patriarchically dominated society (Straus, 1975). Third and of relevance to the present study is the *psychosocial* stream which suggests that women remain in violent relationships due to psychological paralysis that develops through social learning of gender-roles and beliefs that they have no control over situations. This perceived lack of control over situations is suggested to lead to cognitive, emotional and motivational characteristics described as learned helplessness. It is this psychosocial theory involving concepts of learned helplessness and perceived lack of control that provides the foundation for the present research.

Based on a social learning paradigm, the learned helplessness theory (Seligman, 1975) was applied to the study of abused women by Walker (1977-1978). Walker proposed that women remain in abusive relationships because they have learned to believe they have little control over what happens to them.

In an effort to better explain learned helplessness in humans, Abramson, Seligman and Teasdale (1978) reformulated the learned helplessness model by incorporating an attributional framework. This reformulation provides a cognitive

perspective to the theory of learned helplessness and for the purposes of this study was used to guide an examination of battered and nonbattered women's beliefs regarding the causes of negative events in their lives. Simply put, attributions refer to the explanations that people provide for events that occur in their lives. Although most recently victims and their attributions have received attention in the literature, the results of examinations conducted regarding the positive or negative effects of attributing negative events to internal or external sources have been inconclusive (Porter & Miller, 1983; Abramson et al., 1978). This area appears to be a fertile one to examine. As alluded to previously, many women who leave their partners do return. Moreover, resource assistance or other tangible variables do not appear to differentiate women who return from women who do not. Research into attributions (a form of self-blame) is clearly warranted and has great potential for providing explanations for why women remain in abusive relationships.

In the present study, women who were involved in battering relationships were examined in reference to women involved in nonbattering relationships. Specifically, differences in attributional style (explanations women provide for bad events), passiveness, assertion and aggression in battered and nonbattered women were examined. It was also the intent of this study to examine the relationship between prevalence and severity of violence and passiveness. Few previous researchers have actually compared battered women's and nonbattered women's attributional tendencies. To shed light on the delimiting psychological states that may lead women to return or accept battering, it seemed essential that these same states be examined in nonbattered women. Therefore, the main goal of this study was to describe differences in battered and nonbattered women's thoughts and feelings regarding the causes of negative events. In addition, certain psychological states, passiveness and lack of assertion, that are associated with learned helplessness were

examined. Levels of general aggression in battered and nonbattered women were also investigated. It was expected that battered women would be more aggressive than nonbattered women do to what might be interpreted as their responses to the abuse.

At this point, it seems imperative that the researcher clearly state her position regarding women and battering. In no way does the researcher attribute blame to women who are involved, remain, or return to abusive relationships. Although battered women are the focus of the present study, this researcher acknowledges that domestic violence is a much larger social and political issue than is being addressed in the study. It is hoped that in focusing on battered women, information will be found that may be used to assist interventionists in better meeting the needs of battered women and that may be used to empower women to not return or become involved with violent partners in the future.

The women involved in the study were volunteers and were assigned to their groups by predetermined criteria based on self-reports. Administration of the Conflict Tactics Scale was supplemental to the women's initial statements regarding the status of their relationships. This screening device was used to further substantiate the women's appropriateness for placement in the battered or nonbattered groups.

Descriptive information was collected on each woman's education, employment, income, relationship history and abuse history through a self-report questionnaire. Data on the women's general interaction styles were collected using the Interpersonal Behavior Survey. In addition, the women provided information regarding their own and their partners' behavior during the course of a disagreement. Attributional style was assessed by the women's responses to negative hypothetical events presented in the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire and the women's depression level at the time of the study was assessed by the Beck Depression Inventory. Statistical comparisons of the various measures were conducted to examine the relationships

that exist between attributional style, passiveness, assertion, aggression, and severity of violence and passiveness. A review of relevant literature, rationale and specific research questions are presented as Chapter 2.

Chapter 2. Review of the Literature

Introduction

Battering of women is part of contemporary life. In the 1990's this sentence rarely surprises people, but only 15 years ago the physical abuse of wives was a hidden phenomenon. Starting at the grass roots level, feminists named its existence with terms such as wife abuse and marital rape and social institutions began to open to provide material and emotional support for women and their children. Concurrently, social scientists, politicians, health professionals and persons holding judicial positions began to address the incidence of wife abuse. Various theories have developed that attempt to explain the origin of wife abuse. Several of these theories will be discussed in this literature review. In the latter part of the review, the learned helplessness theory, a psychosocial theory of domestic violence, will be presented and a rationale for the present study will be built. The chapter will conclude with a presentation of the research questions and conceptual definitions of variables to be examined.

Theories of Domestic Violence

Theories of domestic violence have mainly developed from three perspectives: psychological, sociological, and psychosocial. Many theories have been formulated regarding the causes and effects of living in abusive relationships and many have addressed the issue of why abused women remain in abusive relationships. A review of some past and contemporary theories will be presented.

Psychological Theory

Masochism Theory.

One of the earliest theories proposed to explain the cause of domestic violence was the theory of female masochism. This theory suggests that women have an unconscious drive to seek pleasure and that suffering for women is inherently bound up with erotic pleasure and is desired for that reason (Rounsaville, 1978; Waites, 1977-1978).

Snell, Rosenwald and Robey (1956) were the first to apply the masochism theory to abused women. They characterized abused women as "aggressive, efficient, masculine, and sexually frigid" (p.111). Snell et al. further reported that the violence women experience fulfills their masochistic needs and helps to maintain their equilibrium, as well as the couple's equilibrium. Investigating the relationship between abuse experienced and the personality need structures of abused women, Kuhl (1984) disputed Snell et al.'s characterization of abused women. Kuhl found that abused women were not highly masculine, efficient, or aggressive, and did not cause the abuse by engaging in masculine behaviour. Though there is little empirical support for the masochism theory, this theory has continued to have an impact on social attitudes. Kuhl's study represented an attempt to dispute the common myths that attribute the causation of the abuse to the women themselves.

Rounsaville (1978) attempted to empirically test the masochism theory using a sample of 31 abused women. He determined that the behaviour suggesting masochism would be evident if the women consistently behaved self-destructively, particularly in interpersonal situations where it was possible for the women to act otherwise. The masochism theory would be supported if the women either actively sought abuse through inducing otherwise non-violent partners to abuse them or sought out violent men. In addition, Rounsaville believed that if masochism is viewed

as a character trait or disposition of abused women, then it would be expected that abused women would have a life long history of abusive relationships.

Rounsaville (1978) did find evidence that could be interpreted to support the theory of masochism. Sixty-eight percent of the women in his study admitted to sometimes escalating arguments with their partners to the point of violence. He also noted that most of the women used means to avert the abuse which they themselves described as inadequate or likely to escalate the violence, such as fighting back or trying to calm their partners down.

Contrary to the masochism theory, many of the women stayed with their violent partners mainly because they felt they had no other options. Seventy-one percent of the women stated that on at least one occasion they feared for their lives. In spite of the fear of retaliation by their partners, 65% had called the police, 97% had confided in at least one close friend, and all had sought assistance from a psychiatrist or physician. Most of the women were, however, dissatisfied with the help offered and felt that they were often blamed for the abuse.

Based upon the evidence from the study, Rounsaville (1978) concluded that support for the theory of masochism was mixed with little evidence to suggest that the women engaged in repetitive self-destructive behaviour. The only behavior found that could possibly be interpreted as self-destructive behaviour was that most of the women reported they occasionally escalated arguments. Hilberman (1980) suggested an explanation for this behaviour. He proposed that when anticipatory anxiety concerning an impending abusive episode became intolerable, women sometimes acted to precipitate the inevitable abuse. This is often misinterpreted as masochism, when it may actually be a coping strategy used by the women to exercise control over an uncontrollable situation.

In summary, the theory of masochism serves has contributed to victim blaming and implies that abused women are to blame for the violence. Notably, however, the theory of masochism on intrapsychic liability fails to take into account the powerful factors that researchers in the field of sociology have espoused.

Sociological Theory

According to the sociological perspective, the cause of domestic violence and the reason abused women remain in abusive relationships can be explained by the social structures and cultural norms that dictate interspousal behaviour. It is clear that these theories attribute the causation of domestic violence to external, and relatively stable factors. Sociologists contend that the cultural norms that have evolved to maintain the family as a loving, supportive, nurturing unit, are ironically the same norms that legitimize and encourage family violence (Hotaling & Straus, 1979).

Gelles and Straus (1979) referred to the violence permitted by cultural norms as legitimate-instrumental and legitimate-expressive. Legitimate-instrumental violence describes the use of physical force to induce some desired act, or prevent an undesired behavior. Legitimate-expressive violence condones the belief that it is better to express anger than to hold it in unexpressed. These forms of violence occur within all family relationships to a greater or lesser extent, and can often be seen in parent-child relationships. Cultural norms imply that it is the parent's obligation to use necessary physical force to adequately train and control their children.

In the case of interspousal relation, similar norms are present, though largely implicit. Dobash and Dobash (1977-1978) reported that although domestic violence is no longer legal, the spirit of the early American cultural norms that condoned and legalized violence against women still linger on, and influence present day legal, religious, political, and economic practices. This influence tacitly suggests that abuse

against women is acceptable, and creates barriers that serve to keep abused women in battering relationships. In a study conducted just over twenty-years ago, Stark and McEvoy (1970) reported that one-fifth of a representative sample of 1,176 adults approved of slapping one's spouse on appropriate occasions. Presently, although such a predominant number may not approve of such violence, inevitably the lag of " approved violence in spousal relationships" still persists.

Psychosocial Theory

Social Learning Theory.

The social learning theory is defined as an integration of differential association with differential reinforcement so that individuals with whom the person interacts are the reinforcers for the person's learning of deviant and nondeviant behaviours (Pagelow, 1984). In other words, the behaviour of an individual or group acts as the stimulus for similar thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours on the part of observers. Social learning theorists believe that women who have experienced or witnessed intrafamilial violence as children have learned to tolerate and accept violence in their family of origin.

As mentioned in the previous section on the sociological theory of domestic violence, certain cultural norms permit the use of legitimate-instrumental and legitimate-expressive violence in intrafamilial relationships (Gelles & Straus, 1979). Most often these forms of physical force are used to manage and discipline children. Steinmetz (1978) reported that between 84% and 97% of all parents have used physical force at some point in their child's life. The social learning theory purports that through the use of physical force, children learn that violence between family members is acceptable and tolerated. The empirical evidence, however, regarding social learning theory is contradictory. According to Steinmetz (1978), the majority of children have experienced some form of violence in their homes. Consistent with

social learning theory it would be expected that many of these children should now be adults involved in violent relationships. Current domestic violence statistics, however, do not support this contention. It is, however, possible that parents' violent acts against their children were so mild or infrequent that social learning did not occur. Actually, many of the research studies on childhood experiences of abuse of battered women have produced contradictory results. Some researchers have found that a high number of abused women in their samples were abused as children (Hilberman & Munson, 1977; Gelles, 1976; Snyder & Fruchtman, 1981). Other researchers have not found a history of childhood abuse among battered women (Pagelow, 1981; Star, 1978).

Greater support for social learning theory comes from studies of women who witnessed violence perpetrated upon their mothers by their fathers (Gelles, 1976; Steinmetz, 1978; Gayford, 1975; Hilberman & Munson, 1977; Coleman, Weiman, & Hsi, 1980; Giles-Sims, 1983). These researchers have found a positive relationship between witnessing marital violence as children and remaining in abusive relationships as adults.

In conclusion, while being the recipient of childhood physical punishment may not perpetuate tolerance of abuse in adulthood, there is evidence that witnessing abuse between parents may have this effect. Based on the studies reviewed in this section, there seems to be some support for the social learning theory of domestic violence. However, this conclusion should be interpreted with caution, since the strength of the relationship between witnessing marital abuse as children and involvement in adult abusive relationships, though positive, has not always been supported in research studies.

Learned Helplessness Theory.

The learned helplessness theory was originally developed by Seligman (1975) in his research on animal based social learning paradigm. Seligman found that dogs who were subjected to noncontingent negative reinforcement (electric shock) learned that their voluntary behavior had no effect on controlling what happened to them. When such aversive stimuli were repeated, the dog's motivation to respond diminished. Furthermore, even if the dog later recognized a connection between its voluntary response and the cessation of the shock, the motivational deficit remained as the dog did not try to avoid the shock.

Seligman (1975) and others (Hiroto & Seligman, 1975) demonstrated that learned helplessness can be applied to human behavior as well. The central hypothesis is that when consequences of behaviour are perceived as uncontrollable, deficits in behavioral, cognitive, and emotional functioning occur.

The cognitive interpretation of animal helplessness has met with much controversy. The result is that researchers have divided and followed two main paths. Some researchers have tried to explain learned helplessness in biological terms; while others have examined cognitive explanations (Maier & Jackson, 1979; Maier & Seligman, 1976). Regardless of this controversy, psychologists interested in human adaptation were quick to recognize the possible pertinence of learned helplessness to failures of human action. Researchers divided into two lines of investigation. In the first line, the basic helplessness phenomenon was investigated in the laboratory with human subjects (see Wortman & Brehm, 1975). In the second, helplessness theory was used to explain a variety of human difficulties (see Garber & Seligman, 1980). Perhaps the best known of these applications has been Seligman's (1972, 1974, 1975) suggestion that learned helplessness may model depression with respect to symptoms, causes, preventions, and cures.

Walker (1977-1978, 1979, 1981) applied the learned helplessness concept to battered women in formulating how abused women become victimized and entrapped in abusive relationships. Walker (1977-1978) interviewed over 100 abused women and found that 75% reported traditional sex role upbringings. Unfortunately, the meaning of this statistic is difficult to interpret because Walker did not indicate whether the percentage of battered women who were reared with traditional sex role upbringings was significantly different from the percentage of women in general who were reared traditionally in the 1970's. Nevertheless, Walker proposed that this kind of upbringing systematically conditions women to believe that their personal worth and survival depends on the traditional feminine roles of submissiveness and dependency, as opposed to more effective and creative responses to life situations.

According to Walker, this sex role socialization makes women particularly vulnerable to learned helplessness. When women find themselves in abusive relationships, the previous conditioning and repeated abuse, diminishes their motivation to respond. The women's cognitive perception of helplessness then becomes generalized to the expectation that none of their responses will result in a favorable outcome, and that they have no choice but to remain in their abusive relationships. The women may actually be able to affect favorable outcomes, but because they "believe" they have no control over their situations, so they do not initiate responses.

Indirect empirical evidence provides support for the learned helplessness theory in its application to abused women. Rounsaville (1978) reported that 71% of the abused women in his study indicated that they wanted to leave their relationships, but only 32% had left. Those who did not leave stated that they had inadequate resources. When Rounsaville compared these women with those who had left their relationships, he found that the amount of resources did not differentiate the two

groups as would be expected. Most of the women who wanted to leave had resources they chose not to use. Seventy-seven percent indicated that they had an independent source of income, 68% had an adequate occupational history, 68% had a place to stay if they left their partners, and 77% had a close family member living nearby. Rounsaville concluded that the abused women who remained in their relationships did not believe they had the resources available. These findings support Walker's contention that once abused women operate from beliefs of helplessness, they will believe that they are trapped whether or not they actually are.

Walker's application of the learned helplessness concept to abused women was based on the original hypothesis (Walker, 1979). Several theorists noted that the original hypothesis failed to specify the conditions under which an individual's perception of an event as noncontingent will be transformed into an expectation that future events will be noncontingent as well (rendering them helpless). The learned helplessness theory was then reformulated incorporating an attributional framework, resolving many of the inadequacies of the original hypothesis (Abramson et al., 1978; Miller & Norman, 1979). The reformulated theory argues that individuals will determine causes of negative events. The causal attribution then supports subsequent expectations for future noncontingency. These expectations, in turn, determine the generality and the chronicity of the individual's state to helplessness (Abramson et al., 1978).

Attribution Theory

Attribution theorists are concerned with the process by which individuals explain and interpret events that they encounter in their environment. The individual is viewed as a constructive thinker who strives to distinguish causes of events and who draws inferences about others and their circumstances. The individual then acts upon these cognitive structures.

Frieze (1979) was the first to extend the concept of attributions to the study of battered women. She found that her respondents tended to respond initially to battering with an internal attribution of causality (the battering occurred because of something about them). As the abuse continued, these women focused on external attributions (battering occurred because of something about the situation), a finding replicated by Giles-Sims (1983). As time passed, the battered women (as described by Porter & Miller, 1983) blamed themselves less for causing the violence but more for allowing the abuse to continue. Jehu's (1989) study of a clinical sample of victims reported that the majority of adult survivors of repeated childhood sexual abuse by a person known to them, blamed themselves.

Evidence supporting the positive or negative effects of internal self-blame (attribution) is inconclusive. Some analysts maintain that internal attributions may be adaptive for survivors of violence as a way of maintaining control over their lives (Porter & Miller, 1983). Others purport that internal attributions for negative outcomes contribute to chronic learned helplessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). Currently, the question of how blame attributions influence the affective and behavioral responses of "victims" is receiving considerable attention. In particular, researchers have endeavored to determine whether some attributional analyses of negative events facilitate adjustment better than others. Bulman and Wortman (1977) reported the intriguing finding that accident victims who blamed themselves for their accidents were judged to be coping better with their condition than were victims who denied responsibility for their accidents. Bulman and Wortman (1977) interpreted this finding to suggest that behavioral self-blame, the identification of specific controllable actions that lead to a negative event, may facilitate the perception of control and consequently, adjustment. In contrast, characterological self-blame, the identification of an enduring quality of oneself that

led to the negative event, is presumed to undermine perception of control and thus lead to feelings of depression and helplessness. Contrary to this research, Frazier (1990) in her research on victim attributions and Post-Rape Trauma found that the pattern of relations between behavioral self-blame and other attributional measures did not support hypothesized distinctions between characterological and behavioral self-blame. Both kinds of self-blame were significantly associated with increased post-rape depression and attributions strongly predicted adjustment, accounting for up to 67% of the variance in 3-day post-rape depression. These findings are in support of the hypothesis that all types of self-blame are associated with poorer adjustment for victims of rape (Katz & Burt, 1988; Meyer & Taylor, 1986), incest (Gold, 1986), and sexual harassment (Jensen & Gutek, 1982).

It seems from this contradictory data that negative life events can suggest a variety of different causal questions to victims, with a consequence that both the degree and meaning of self-blame can vary considerably (Porter & Miller, 1983). For example, a battered woman may believe that her partner's violence was due to "something about her". A battered woman can also take blame for causing the violence, for not being able to modify the violence or for being too tolerant of the violence (Porter & Miller, 1983). Which of these she means in blame attributions may make an important difference to her affective state and ability to cope. If blame for only one of these issues is assessed it may not be possible to fully understand or predict the woman's psychological state. Thus, it appears that how a self-blaming victim feels about the internal factor and its formal properties (e.g. stable vs. unstable; specific vs. global) may be significant in determining whether a victim copes poorly or well. In essence, any account of the victimization process must consider the phenomenon of attributed self-blame. The questions of when attributional self-blame

occurs, what forms it takes, and its relation to the coping process are just some of the important issues that must be addressed (Porter & Miller, 1983).

Examining explanatory styles, a cognitive personality variable defined by an individual's habitual way of explaining bad events (Peterson & Seligman, 1984), suggests a way to examine self-blame (attributions) as well as the formal properties of attributions. Formal properties of the attributions such as the locus of causality, stability of causality and globality of causality will be examined.

In summary, some people explain bad events fatalistically by pointing to causes within themselves that are chronic and pervasive. Other people favor more efficacious explanations external to themselves that are highly circumscribed across time and situation. The former people are regarded as more pessimistic than the latter and it is believed that their explanatory style predisposes them to react to failure and frustration with passivity (Lin & Peterson, 1990).

Learned Helplessness and Passivity

Several researchers have noted that a relationship appears to be exist between passivity and learned helplessness and/or battered women (Ball & Wyman, 1978; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981; Seligman, 1975; Star, 1978; Symonds, 1979; Walker, 1979). Seligman (1975) recognized that passivity often occurs in cases of learned helplessness. In essence, he proposed that animals and humans become passive and unmotivated to respond after noncontingent aversive events. Interestingly, however, Maier & Seligman (1976) found that passivity following a bad event occurs only when an effortful response is required. This finding may have implications for the relationship between severity of violence and passivity in battered women. Perhaps "minor" violence becomes habitual and victims of such violence are not required to make strong behavioral attempts to stop the violence as compared to victims experiencing severe violence. In other words, women who experience minor violence

may not develop feelings of helplessness as strongly as do women experiencing more frequent and severe violence. Learned helplessness in humans is proposed to develop when people learn that their actions do not change outcomes. Perhaps women experiencing less frequent and less severe violence do not experience many noncontingent aversive events. Thus women experiencing "minor" violence may be more assertive than those experiencing severe violence. Minor altercations may be customary and dealing with the abuse requires little effort as it becomes a habitual act. Thus, women who experience infrequent minor violence may also not feel as helpless and passive as women who experience frequent severe violence. Women who experience more frequent and severe violence may have encountered more situations through which they learned they could seldom bring about resolution or change.

Also in support of the relation between learned helplessness and passivity, Rosenbaum and O'Leary (1981) studied characteristics of abusive couples. Using two measures of assertion, they found that abused wives showed significantly less general and spouse specific assertion than "satisfactorily" married women. Telch and Lindquist (1984) examined assertion as part of a study designed to investigate relationship specific characteristics of violent couples. The results of their study indicated that violent couples reported significantly more aggressive and passive responses on a Personal Assertion Analysis and significantly fewer assertive responses than "satisfied" (not discordant) nonviolent couples. Taken together, the results of previous research suggest that assertion, aggression and passivity may be important characteristics to investigate in battered women. Passiveness and assertion as referenced in the preceding paragraphs, appear to be related to the development of learned helplessness and thus seem obvious psychological states to examine. The relation of aggression to battered women, however, is not as clear. This researcher postulates that aggression is an important variable to investigate in battered women

and believes that aggression may be indirectly related to learned helplessness. According to the reformulated learned helplessness theory, in meeting with noncontingent aversive events people learn to believe that their behaviour will not influence outcomes. Thus, their response alternatives to certain situations are reduced, leaving them passive and non-assertive. It is proposed that if a battered woman's response alternatives have been diminished, (she does not assert herself or is passive) she may in turn respond aggressively. In other words, her aggression may be related to the fact that she has few response alternatives. Her aggression may also be a means of eliciting the violent behavior that in her mind may seem to be inevitable. Perhaps in anticipation of what seems to be an unavoidable violent episode, she may attempt to control at least in some way, the onset of the violence. In addition, battered women may appear to have more aggressive tendencies than nonbattered women because they may in their own self-defense behave aggressively in interacting with their partners.

Learned Helplessness and Depression

The reformulation assigns particular roles to three dimensions alluded to previously. Internality of causal beliefs affects self-esteem loss following bad events. If the person explains a bad event by an internal factor, then self-esteem loss is more likely to occur. If a person explains the event by an external factor, then self-esteem loss is less likely to occur. Stability of causal beliefs affects the chronicity of helplessness and depression following bad events. If a bad event is explained by a cause that persists, depressive reactions to that event tend to persist. If the event is explained by a transient factor, then depressive reactions tend to be short lived. Finally, globality of causal belief influences the pervasiveness of deficits following bad events. If one believes that a global factor has caused a bad event, then helplessness deficits tend to occur in a variety of different situations. If one believes that a more

specific factor is the cause, the deficits tend to be circumscribed (Peterson & Seligman, 1984). In essence, the central prediction of the reformulation is that if explanatory style invokes internal, global, and stable causes, then the person tends to become depressed when bad events occur.

Researchers have found converging evidence in support of this prediction. Peterson and Seligman (1984) reviewed the following studies that examined the relationship between explanatory style and depression. Cross-sectional correlational studies have found that severity of depressive symptoms is often correlated with the habitual use of internal, stable, and global causes to explain bad events involving the self. Longitudinal studies mostly support the prediction that depressive explanatory style precedes depressive symptoms. Experiments of nature suggest that the helplessness model may be useful in explaining reactions to major life events. In particular, the studies suggest that the depressive explanatory style tends to produce depression when bad events are encountered. Other studies show that particular explanations of bad events are associated with depression and poor coping. Laboratory investigations of learned helplessness in humans have been controversial. However, laboratory data do indicate that the measurement and manipulation of explanations and explanatory style, when accompanied by the manipulation of bad events, yield what the theory predicts. The global-specific dimension, when manipulated and when measured, governs the breadth of helplessness deficits. The internal-external dimension, when manipulated, appears to govern self-esteem deficits. Finally, tentative evidence suggests that the stable-unstable dimension governs the duration of helplessness, a depressive analogue. Lastly, case studies were conducted to ascertain the applicability of the reformulation to real lives. The results of these studies suggest that the helplessness reformulation can be applied to real people over the life span (for review of studies see Peterson & Seligman, 1984).

Research has also found that people who explain bad events in pessimistic fashion are more likely than optimistic individuals to fall ill, to visit physicians, to show faulty immune function and even to die young (Peterson, 1988 ; Peterson & Bossio, 1990; Peterson & Seligman, 1987; Peterson, Seligman & Vaillant, 1988).

In sum, although much of the research in the area of explanatory styles to this point has concerned itself only with correlational studies, the results of the research do suggest that psychological variables indeed influence physical well-being (Angell, 1985) as well as behaviour and implies that these cognitive variables may have significant influence in the treatment of victims such as battered women.

Therefore, it is the purpose of the present study to examine the nature of the relationship among attributional style, aggression, assertion, and passiveness in a group of battered and a group of nonbattered women. The relationship between severity of violence and passiveness will also be explored. More precisely, it is of interest to determine the following:

Research Question #1

Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of their attributional styles? It is predicted that battered women will more often display an attributional style that is internal, global and stable than nonbattered women for negative hypothetical events.

Research Question #2

Can scores on passivity, assertion, and aggression scales discriminate between a group of battered and nonbattered women? It is predicted that battered women will be significantly more passive, more aggressive and less assertive than nonbattered women.

Research Question #3

Is there a relationship between passiveness and severity of violence? It is predicted that passiveness will be positively correlated with the severely violent subscale on the Conflict Tactics Scale.

Operational Definitions

Within the violence literature there is some variance in definition of terms used in the present study. Thus, specification of terms is warranted.

Wife Abuse

Wife abuse is defined in this paper as the use of physical force by a man against his intimate cohabiting partner. This force can range from pushes and slaps to assaults with deadly weapons. Although many women suffer psychological abuse (such as humiliation and verbal degradation) from their partners, the present study focuses primarily on physical abuse. Two terms will be used interchangeably throughout the paper: wife abuse, and battered woman.

Attributional Style

Causal Attributions. Causal attributions refer to the explanations individuals construct for their own behavior and the behavior of others. The individual is viewed as a constructive thinker searching for causes of events, drawing inferences about others and their circumstances, and acting upon these cognitive structures (Kelly, 1972). For the purpose of this study, causal attributions refer to the causes subjects attributed to negative hypothetical events on the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire.

Locus of Causality. Locus of causality refers to whether an individual attributes the cause of a negative event to an "internal" or "external" factor. The locus of causality is determined by the participant's response to the following question: "Is the cause of the (event) due to something about you or something about

other people or circumstances?" The former refers to internal attributions and the latter refers to external attributions.

Stability of Causality. Stability of causality pertains to the stability of the attribution as indicated by the women's responses to the following questions: "In the future when (event) occurs will this cause again be present?" A stable attribution is long-lived or recurrent; and an unstable attribution is short-lived or intermittent.

Globality of Causality. Globality of causality refers to the limits of generality of the attribution: "Is the cause something that just affects the presented event or does it also influence other areas of the person's life?" Global attributions generalize to other situations. Specific attributions are relevant to only the event under consideration.

Attributional Style. Attributional style refers to the way in which the women responded to hypothetical events along the attributional dimensions identified above (i.e., internal/external, stable/unstable, and global/specific). No research questions refer to Attributional Style but it is alluded to throughout the study.

Psychological States Derived from scores on the Interpersonal Behavior Survey

Aggression. Aggressive behaviour refers to behaviour that results from hostile feelings and attitudes. Underlying the aggressive behaviour may be the goal of attacking a person and/or a desire to exert power over someone.

Assertion. Assertive behaviour is directed toward reaching a desired goal. An assertive person has a positive attitude toward other people and attempts to meet his or her goal by eliminating interference. No attacking of personhood occurs.

Passiveness. Passiveness refers to submissive behaviour. A person who exhibits passive tendencies is in general neither aggressive or assertive.

Conflict Tactic Measures of Means of Interaction used During a Disagreement (Straus, 1990)

Reasoning. The use of "rational discussion, argument, and reasoning--an intellectual approach to the dispute" (p.29).

Verbal Aggression. The use of "verbal and nonverbal acts which symbolically hurt the other, or the use of threats to hurt the other" (p. 29).

Violence. The use of "physical force against another person as a means of resolving the conflict" (p.29). [subscales = minor and severe]

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Analysis

The study was of quasi-experimental group design. Random selection was not possible as all participants were volunteers. Three types of data analyses were undertaken. First, a descriptive analysis was performed to yield demographic data and relational and abuse history on the volunteers who participated in the study. Secondly, two-tailed independent t-tests were conducted to determine if significant differences were present in battered and nonbattered women's locus of causality, stability of causality, and globality of causal explanations for hypothetical negative events. Differences in battered women's self-reports of assertion, aggression, and passiveness were also investigated through analyses using two-tailed independent t-tests. Although all predictions were directional, two-tailed t-tests were conducted because they are more conservative than one-tailed tests. A Point Biserial Correlation Coefficient was calculated to determine if a positive relationship was present between severity of violence and passiveness. In post-hoc analysis severity of violence was also correlated with general aggression and assertion. A regression analysis was conducted to determine abuse history variables (child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, witnessing abuse at home as a child, sexual abuse in an earlier adult relationship and physical abuse in a earlier adult relationship) prediction strength of group membership. In addition, all dependent variables were entered into a correlation to determine their relationship to each other. To determine if group membership was more strongly related to the dependent variables than education level, correlations of group to the dependent variables and education to the dependent variables were examined.

Participants

Thirty women between the ages of 23 and 69 years served as participants in this study. Two groups were formed from the thirty women. Group one consisted of fifteen women who were (a) 18 years of age or older and who had been in a sexual cohabiting relationship with a male for a minimum of one year (b) must have been living with their partners within the last year (within one year of their participation in the study) and (c) must have answered "yes" to the following question: Within the last year, have you ever been physically abused by your present or former spouse, lover, or boyfriend? Abuse was defined as the occurrence of any of the following behaviors, either alone or in any combination:

> Pushing, slapping, hitting, biting, objects thrown at your person, punching, kicking, choking, being struck with an object other than the hand, forced to do something at knife or gun point, knifing, shooting, being thrown to the ground or floor (Launius & Lindquist, 1988).

Group two consisted of fifteen women who met criteria (a) and (b) above and who answered no to the question indicating abuse.

All women were residents of the province of Alberta and were drawn from Edmonton and outlying areas.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire (DQ)

A questionnaire designed to measure demographic statistics of the groups- age, income religion, education, relationship and abuse history.

Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire

Peterson and Villanova's (1988) Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire (EASQ) was used in this study to measure explanatory (attributional) style. This self-report instrument yields measures of patterns of "explanatory style" which is the tendency to select certain causal explanations for events as either internal versus external, stable versus unstable, and global versus specific causes. The questionnaire presents subjects with negative hypothetical events involving themselves (e.g. You meet a friend who acts hostilely toward you). Subjects are asked to provide the "one major cause" if this event actually happened, and then to rate their provided cause along 7 - point scales according to its internality, stability and globality. The subject's response pertaining to the "major cause" of the event is not used in scoring. This response enables the subject to answer questions concerning the causes internality, stability and globality. Scores are derived by simply averaging within dimensions and across events for individual dimension scores, or across dimensions and across events for composite scores. The overall results indicate an overall score of explanatory style, from optimistic to pessimistic.

The EASQ has greater internal consistency than its previous version, because it is based on 24 (as opposed to 6) bad events (Peterson, Semmel, von Baeyer, Abramson, Metalsky & Seligman, 1982). Internal consistencies, estimated by Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha, were .66 for internality, .85 for stability and .88 for globality. Correlations between the dimensions of explanatory style and the ratings of explanations for actual bad events tend to support the predictive validity of these dimensions (Peterson & Villanova, 1988). It should be noted, however, that this instrument was normed on a university population. Originally, the samples for the present study were to be drawn exclusively from a university population. Due to sample inadequacy, participants from both student and nonstudent populations were

solicited. This instrument may not be as sensitive in measuring attributional style in a nonstudent sample as in a student sample. However, the previous version of this measure, the Attributional Style Questionnaire has been used extensively to examine explanatory style in non-student populations (Peterson and Seligman, 1984).

Interpersonal Behavior Survey

The Interpersonal Behavior Survey (IBS) is a true/false, self-report inventory developed to assess assertiveness and aggressiveness as separate behavior classes. In addition to general assertiveness and general aggressiveness scores, the inventory measure subclasses of assertiveness, subclasses of aggressiveness, components of interpersonal relationship style, and types of instrument validity.

Available information appears to support the reliability of the IBS. Internal consistency coefficients (coefficient alpha) are acceptable ranging from .52 to .88 (M=.71) for the full versions of the scales at cross-validation. Test-retest reliability is good with correlations ranging from .71 to .96 (M=.89) at a 10 week interval. Differences between scale means from first to second testing did not show statistical significance (Mauger & Adkinson 1987).

Validation of the IBS has followed three directions, but as with the reliability data, the validity data often do not include the complete IBS or other necessary information. Factor analytic investigation appears to support the premise that the IBS scales of assertion and aggression evaluate separate response classes. The validity of the IBS scales is also based on their relations with a number of self-report scales. In general these relations are in the expected direction and thus support the scales' validity. Taking these findings as a whole, it appears that the IBS has good reliability and internal consistency.

Conflict Tactics Scale

The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) was developed to assess the overt means by which family members respond to conflicts. Items on the CTS reflect three major types of tactics: the use of rational discussion, the use of symbolically or emotionally harmful verbal or physical acts, and the use of physical force or violence. For the purposes of this study the CTS was used to determine the frequency and severity of conflict in the battered and nonbattered group's relationships with their partners. Internal consistency reliability of the CTS has been addressed by item-to-total score correlations (.70 to .87) and alpha coefficients (.62 to .88) for the verbal aggression and violence conflict resolution strategies (Straus, 1979). Reliability of the CTS has been questioned because Szinovacz (1983) found that husbands report less use of violence than their wives indicate is used against them, and wives report more of their own use of violence than husbands admit receiving. As this study is concerned mainly with women's attributions and perceptions (psychological variables) this limitation is considered minor.

In support of validity, Bulcroft and Straus (1975) reported comparable (.50 to .64) CTS scores of students and their parents for aggressive and violent conflict resolution. Construct validity is claimed from research studies finding relationships with the CTS consistent with predictions (Kalmuss & Straus, 1982; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).

Beck Depression Inventory

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI; Beck, Ward, Mendolsohn, Mock, & Erbaugh, 1961) was used to measure depression in the subjects. The BDI is a 21 - item self-report measure of depressive symptoms, with each item containing four symptoms ordered in increasing severity. For each item, respondents select a statement that best describes their feelings during the past week. Research suggests

that the BDI has good internal consistency reliability (Alpha = .82 to .91) and convergent validity although its discriminant validity has been questioned (Gotlib, 1984). The BDI was administered for the purpose of measuring and in a sort partialing out depression. The reformulation of the learned helplessness model from an attributional position suggests that an explanatory style in which bad events are explained by internal, stable and global causes is associated with depressive symptoms. Peterson and Seligman (1984) also suggest that this type of explanatory style is also a risk factor for depression.

Procedure

Participants were initially solicited by the researcher from University of Alberta undergraduate classes and through poster advertisements. The researcher personally presented the criteria to be met by students wishing to participate, and described the significance of researching in the area of domestic violence to all students in the classes. Posters that defined the criteria for participation and that listed a confidential telephone number at which the researcher could be contacted, were distributed.

Response from presentations to students and from poster advertisements was not sufficient. In response to class presentations, three students volunteered for participation in the comparison group. One participant in the battered group volunteered after seeing a poster advertisement, and twelve participants in the comparison group responded to poster advertisements. Of the twelve women in the comparison group who responded, one woman's scores were discarded due to missing values on some measures. In an effort to solicit more women, ten private practitioners and ten women's groups within the city of Edmonton and outlying areas were contacted by telephone. The telephone call was then followed by a letter (see Appendix B) describing the purpose of the present research and the criteria for

participation. In addition a poster was sent that defined participation criteria and that listed the confidential telephone number at which the researcher could be contacted. This exposure brought responses from fourteen women in the battered group and one woman in the comparison group.

Interviews, approximately three hours in length, were conducted by the researcher with each volunteer. During the interviews, participants were presented with research packets containing an informed consent form, the Beck Depression Inventory, Interpersonal Behavior Survey, Conflict Tactics Scale, Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire and a Demographic Questionnaire in identical order of presentation (see Appendices). All dependent measures with the exception of the Conflict Tactics Scale are designed to be self-administered, with standard written instructions for each. The Conflict Tactics Scale was administered by the researcher. An exception was made to standardized administration of the Interpersonal Behavior Survey. The researcher was concerned that poor reading skills might act as an extraneous variable in the study, therefore she read the questions on the Interpersonal Behavior Survey for three women in the experimental group.

Validity

Threats to Internal Validity. Due to the quasi-experimental design of this study, the influence of extraneous variables on the results is of some concern. Consideration is given to the threats described by Kazdin (1980) in their relation to the present investigation.

History refers to the possibility of any other event occurring during a study that could influence the results. Each participant was interviewed on only one occasion; therefore, the possibility of history influencing internal validity in this study is highly unlikely.

Maturation refers to changes that occur within the participants during the course of an investigation. Two examples of maturation are physical and mental development. Again, participation in this study was brief. Therefore, the likelihood of this threat being significant is minimal.

Testing effects and Statistical Regression are not of concern in this study. Multiple testing occasions did not take place.

Instrumentation refers to any change in a measuring instrument or assessment procedure during the course of a study. To protect for this threat, the examiner conducted all interviews and used standard written instructions in administration. However, exceptions in standard administration were made for two participants in the battered group in completing the Interpersonal Behavior Survey. The researcher was concerned that low reading skills would influence participants' responses, she therefore read the questions on the IBS to two of the women in the battered group. This alternative administration, however, was used to control for reading differences and therefore is not considered a significant threat.

Threats to External Validity. Threats to external validity refer to parameters of generalization of the research to the population under consideration.

Generality across subjects refers to the limit that results can be extended to others. Small sample size and the fact that fourteen of the fifteen battered women had left their partners, limits the genralizability of the study. Women still living with their violent partners may very well respond differently than the battered women in this study. In consideration of this threat and to limit the retrospective nature of participant responses, women who participated must have been living with their partners within the last year. Differences in education levels of participants were also of concern, and subsidiary analyses were undertaken to examine the relationship of

education to the dependent measures. The results suggest that group membership was more strongly related to dependent measures than was education.

Generality across settings, responses, and time do not appear to be significant threats to the external validity of this study. The researcher attempted to make all participants feel comfortable and relaxed during interviews.

Reactive assessment refers to the extent to which participants are aware that they are being assessed and the extent to which this influences the way they respond. This threat was of concern in the present investigation. All of the women in the study were volunteers and within the battered group, fourteen of the fifteen women had left their partners. Many of the women had been involved in some kind of intervention process with professionals. Although no women had sought assistance from shelters, they were involved with professionals whose opinions may have influenced these women. The simple fact that these women were volunteers who wanted to assist other battered women, suggests that they are aware of the errors made in blaming battered women. Thus, it is possible that they may have reported what they thought they should be feeling or thinking rather than what they were actually experiencing. To reduce this threat, an attempt was made by the researcher to encourage participants to respond according to how they felt not according to how they expected they should feel or behave. Chapter 4 will present the results of the study.

Chapter 4. Results

Demographic Data

The demographic data are presented in Table 1. Thirty women between the ages of 23 and 69 years served as participants in this study. Two groups were formed from the thirty women. The Battered group consisted of fifteen women between the ages of 23 and 69 years with a mean age of 35 years. The Nonbattered group consisted of fifteen women between the ages of 24 and 55 years with a mean age of 33 years. Seventy-three percent of the Battered women were Caucasian, 20% Asian, and 7% were Native. One hundred percent of the Nonbattered women were Caucasian. The sample represented various religious denominations - predominantly Catholic and Protestant. Within the Battered group 20% of the women were Catholic, 47% Protestant, 7% labeled themselves as non-institutional Christians, and 26% affiliated themselves with no religion. Thirteen percent of the Nonbattered group were Catholic, 53% Protestant, 7% non-institutional Christians, 7% Mormon, and 20% affiliated themselves with no religion.

Seven percent of the women in the Battered group had less than grade eight education. Thirty three percent had some high school as their highest level of education, 20% finished high school, 20% finished technical or business school, and 20% finished some college (university). The highest education levels of women in the Nonbattered group were also gathered. Thirteen percent of the women had some graduate courses, 33% finished college with a bachelor's degree, 14% some college, 20% finished technical or business school, and 20% finished high school. No women in the Nonbattered group had less than high school education.

Fifty-three percent of women in the Battered group and 73% of women in the Nonbattered group were employed. Of those battered women who were employed

100% had annual incomes of $20,000 or less. On the contrary, 36% of employed nonbattered women had annual incomes higher than $20,001.

Relationship History

The women's relationship history is presented in Table 2. Twenty-seven percent of the battered women were married, 60% separated, and 13% indicated they were divorced. Sixty percent of the Nonbattered group were married and 40% were cohabiting. Forty-five percent of the women in the Battered group who were married to their partners had known them twelve months or fewer before they were married. All married women in the Nonbattered group had known their partners for more than twelve months prior to marriage. Seventy-five percent of the women in the Battered group who were cohabiting had known their partners less than twelve months prior to cohabitation. Eighty-three percent of the women in the Nonbattered group who were cohabiting had known their partners for twelve months or fewer prior to cohabitation.

History of Abuse

Table 3 presents the women's history of abuse in both their families of origin and in their adult relationships. Forty-seven percent of women in the Battered group reported witnessing the physical abuse of someone in their homes as children. However, only 13% of women in the Nonbattered group reported witnessing the physical abuse of someone in their homes as children. Forty percent of the Battered group and 7% of the Nonbattered group reported being physically abused as children. Twenty-seven percent of the Battered group reported being sexually abused in an earlier relationship and likewise 27% reported being physically abused in an earlier relationship. Thirteen percent of the Nonbattered reported being sexually abused in a previous relationship, while 20% reported being physically abused.

Partner's Income and Education

In addition to responding to questions regarding themselves, the participants provided information regarding their partner's income and highest education level completed. Differences between battering and nonbattering men's education and income were examined. Interestingly, the results of an independent t-test reveal that there is a significant difference in battering and nonbattering men's education level, $t(28) = -4.50$, $p<.05$. However, no significant difference was found between battering and nonbattering men's income levels, $t(28) = 1.50$, ns. In fact, 27% of the men who battered made over $40,000 per year while only 20% of the nonbatterers made over $40,000 per year.

Table 1

Demographic Data

	Age of women				
Group	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69
Battered	40%	40%	13%	-	7%
Nonbattered	47%	33%	7%	13%	-

	Race		
	Caucasian	Asian	Native
Battered	73%	7%	20%
Nonbattered	100%	-	-

	Religion				
Group	Cath.	Prot.	Non-instit.	Mormon	None
Battered	20%	47%	7%	-	26%
Nonbattered	13%	53%	7%	7%	20%

Note. Cath. = Roman Catholic; Prot = Protestant; Non-instit. = Non-institutional Christian

Table 1 (Continued)

Demographic Data

	Education level						
Group	Less than G.R. 8	Some H.S.	Finished H.S.	Finished tech./bus.	Some College	Finished College	Some Graduate
Battered	7%	33%	20%	20%	20%	-	-
Nonbattered	-	-	20%	20%	14%	33%	13%

	Employment status	
Group	Yes	No
Battered	53%	47%
Nonbattered	73%	27%

Note. G.R. = Grade

H.S. = High school

tech./bus. = Technical or Business School

Graduate = graduate courses

Table 1 (Continued)

Demographic Data

	Income level						
Group	< than 5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001-20,000	20,001-25,000	25,001-30,000	>than 30,000
Battered n=9	-	22%	67%	11%	-	-	-
Nonbattered n=11	-	27%	27%	9%	9%	9%	19%

Note. n = 15 for each group in Table 1 unless otherwise specified.

For Income Level - numbers represent Canadian dollars.

Table 2

Relationship History

	Marital status			
Group	Married	Cohabiting	Separated	Divorced
Battered	27%	-	60%	13%
Nonbattered	60%	40%	-	-

	Length of time women knew partners					
	3-6 ms.	7-12 ms.	13 ms.-3 yrs.	4-6 yrs.	more than 6 yrs.	
Battered						
Before marriage	9%	36%	28%	18%	9%	n = 11
Before cohabiting	50%	25%	25%	-	-	n = 4
Nonbattered						
Before marriage	-	-	67%	22%	11%	n = 9
Before cohabiting	-	33%	50%	17%	-	n = 6

Table 2 (Continued)

Relationship History

	Number of times left current partner					
	Zero	Once	Twice	3-4 times	5-6 times	More than 6
Battered	13%	27%	20%	27%	13%	-
Nonbattered	93%	7%	-	-	-	-

Note. n = 15 for each group

Table 3

History of Abuse

	Physically abused in earlier adult relationship	
Group	Yes	No
Battered	27%	73%
Nonbattered	20%	80%

	Physically abused as a child	
	Yes	No
Battered	40%	60%
Nonbattered	7%	93%

	Witnessed abuse in home as a child	
	Yes	No
Battered	47%	53%
Nonbattered	13%	87%

Table 3 (Continued)

History of Abuse

	Sexually abused in earlier adult relationship	
Group	Yes	No
Battered	27%	73%
Nonbattered	13%	87%

	Sexually abused as a child	
	Yes	No
Battered n = 14	57%	43%
Nonbattered n = 15	13%	87%

Note. n=15 unless specified otherwise.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Groups for Dependent Measures

Group	Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire and Beck Dep. Inventory								
	Mean Dep.	SD	Mean Internal	SD	Mean Global	SD	Mean Stable	SD	Depression
Battered	4.56	.61	3.87	1.26	3.92	.97	16.06	9.26	
Nonbattered	4.17	.63	3.54	.99	4.25	.81	4.67	4.82	

Group	Interpersonal Behavior Survey					
	Mean Ggr	SD	Mean Sgr	SD	Mean Pa	SD
Battered	42.53	7.60	41.67	8.25	51.73	6.08
Nonbattered	40.33	7.13	55.4	7.87	42.27	8.77

Table 4 (Continued)

Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Variables

											Conflict Tactics Scale					
Group	Mean Reaspt	SD	Mean Vaggpt	SD	Mean Mviopt	SD	Mean Sviopt	SD	Mean Reassp	SD	Mean Vaggsp	SD	Mean Mviosp	SD	Mean Sviosp	SD
Battered	7.80	4.87	12.80	5.62	2.07	2.12	.53	.92	4.67	4.29	27.27	5.70	9.67	5.80	7.93	.92
Nonbattered	8.40	2.97	7.67	3.74	.00	.00	.00	.00	7.47	2.92	5.20	3.90	.00	.00	.00	.00

Note. (IBS Scales) Ggr = General Aggression; Sgr = General Assertion; Pa = Passive Aggression

(CTS Scales) Reaspt = Participant Reasoning; Vaggpt = Participant Verbal Aggression; Mviopt = Participant Minor Violence; Sviopt = Participant Severe Violence; Reassp = Male Partner Reasoning; Vaggsp = Male partner Verbal Aggression; Mviosp = Male Partner Minor Violence; Sviosp = Male Partner Severe Violence.

Analyses of Hypotheses

See Table 4 for a summary of means and standard deviations of dependent variables used in conducting the following analyses. It should be noted that it was not possible to calculate mean and standard deviation scores for passiveness. Therefore, no mean or standard deviation scores for passiveness are presented in Table 4. Passiveness is a dichotomous score.

Research Question #1

Locus of Causality. Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of their locus of causality (internal or external) for negative hypothetical events? It was predicted that battered women would more commonly display a locus of causality that was internal than would nonbattered women.

Women's locus of causality scores were derived from women's interpretations of causes of the negative hypothetical events presented in the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire as being internal or external. The women indicated their beliefs by assigning the locus of the cause of the event a score along a 7 point Likert scale. At the extremes, 7 referred to the cause being entirely due to them, and 1 referred to the cause being due to other people or circumstances. Women's responses to the Likert scales on EASQ were totaled, divided by the number of events and reported as internal scores.

An independent t-test was performed to analyze the difference in means between the two groups. Although not highly statistically reliable, the results revealed a trend toward battered women having a more internal locus of causality than nonbattered women, t (28) = 1.72, $p<.10$.

Stability of Causality. Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of their attributions regarding the stability of causes for negative hypothetical events? It was predicted that battered women would more commonly describe the causes of negative hypothetical events as stable than would nonbattered women.

Women's stability of causality scores were derived from women's interpretations of causes of the negative hypothetical events presented in the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire as being stable or transient. The women indicated their beliefs by assigning the stability of the cause of the event a score along a 7 point Likert scale. At the extremes, 7 referred to the cause being something that would persist over time, and 1 referred to the cause being something that would never again be present. Women's responses to the Likert scales on EASQ were totaled, divided by the number of events and reported as stable scores.

An independent t-test was performed to analyze the difference in means between the two groups. The results did not support the prediction that battered women would more commonly describe the causes of hypothetical events as being more stable than would nonbattered women, t (28) = 1.04, ns.

Globality of Causality. Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of their attributions regarding the globality of causes for negative hypothetical events? It was predicted that battered women would more commonly describe the causes of negative hypothetical events as global than would nonbattered women.

Women's globality of causality scores were derived from the women's interpretations of causes of the negative hypothetical events presented in the

Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire as being global or specific. The women indicated their beliefs by assigning the globality of the cause of the event a score along a 7 point Likert scale. At the extremes, 7 referred to the cause being something that would affect many other areas in their lives, and 1 referred to the cause being something that would only affect the situation presented. Women's responses to the Likert scales on EASQ were totaled, divided by the number of events and reported as global scores.

An independent t-test was conducted to analyze the difference in means between the two groups on the dimension of globality of causality. The results did not support the prediction that battered women would more commonly interpret the causes of negative hypothetical events as being global (affecting other areas of their lives) than would nonbattered women, $t<1$.

Research Question #2

Aggression. Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of general aggression tendencies? It was predicted that battered women would be more aggressive than nonbattered women.

Women's aggression scores were derived from women's self-reports on the Interpersonal Behavior Survey. The aggression scores were obtained through examination of the women's responses to true/false questions regarding their interaction tendencies with people. The aggression score is a continuous measure of their aggressiveness when interacting with people.

An independent t-test was conducted to analyze the difference in means between the two groups on aggression scores. The results did not support the

prediction that battered women would indicate more aggressive tendencies than would nonbattered women, t (28) <1 .

Assertion. Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of their general assertion tendencies as derived from the IBS? It was predicted that battered women would be less assertive than nonbattered women.

Women's assertion scores were derived from women's self-reports on the Interpersonal Behavior Survey. The assertion scores were obtained through examination of the women's responses to true/false questions regarding their interaction tendencies with people. The assertion score is a continuous measure of their assertiveness when interacting with people.

An independent t-test was conducted to analyze the difference in means between the two groups. The results support the prediction that battered women would be less assertive than nonbattered women, $t(28) = -4.66$, $p<.05$.

Passiveness.

Do battered and nonbattered women involved in cohabiting relationships differ significantly in terms of their passive tendencies? It was predicted that significantly more battered women than nonbattered women would be passive.

Passiveness was also assessed by the women's self-reports on the Interpersonal Behavior Survey. Passiveness scores were calculated and each given a dichotomous value of (0-not passive) or (1-passive). A passive score was assigned if participants had both assertion and aggression scores below t-scores of 40.

A Chi-Square test for independence was conducted to test the prediction that significantly more battered women than nonbattered women would be passive.

The results support the prediction that significantly more battered than nonbattered women would indicate passiveness tendencies, X^2 (1, N = 30) = 4.62, p<.05. See Chi-square in Table 5.

Research Question #3

Passiveness and Severity of Violence.

Is there a relationship between passiveness and severe violence? It was predicted that passiveness would correlate positively with the severe violence.

The passiveness score is a dichotomous score derived from the IBS. The severe violence score is a continuous score derived from participants' reports on the CTS regarding the frequency and form of physical violence committed against them by their partners.

A Point Biserial Correlation was conducted to test the prediction that severe violence would correlate with passiveness. The results of the correlation were not significant, r = .26, ns. See correlation matrix (Table A-1) in the appendix.

In post-hoc analysis the relationships of severe violence to general aggression and general assertion were investigated. The results of a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient indicate that the relation between severe violence (sviosp) and general aggression is not significant, r = .22, ns. However, the correlation of sviosp with general assertion did reach significance, r = - .46. This means that as severe violence committed by the males against the women increased in frequency, assertion levels in women decreased. See Table A-1 in appendix for a summary of these results.

Table 5

Chi-square Table of Group by Passiveness

	Passiveness			
	no	yes	Row Total	%
Group				
Battered	11	4	15	50.0
Nonbattered	15	0	15	50.0
Column Total	26	4	30	
%	86.7	3.3		100.0

Additional Research Findings

Subsidiary analyses were undertaken. Five variables representing the women's abuse histories were entered into a Logistic Regression analysis predicting group membership (battered or nonbattered). Three of the variables, child sexual abuse, child physical abuse and witnessing physical abuse at home, referred to the participants experiences as children. The other two variables, sexual abuse in an earlier relationship and physical abuse in an earlier relationship, referred to the participants relationships as adolescents or adults. Each variable was first entered into a logistic regression analysis to examine individual prediction strength. A multiple regression analysis was later conducted to examine the prediction strength of group membership when information from all five variables was considered.

Child Sexual Abuse.

Child Sexual Abuse was found to have significant prediction power for group membership, accounting for 54% of the variance in group membership, $R^2 = .54$.

Child Physical Abuse.

Child Physical abuse also had significant prediction power for group membership, accounting for up to 45% of the variance in group membership, $R^2 = .45$.

Witnessing Physical Abuse.

Witnessing the physical abuse of someone in their home as children also had significant prediction power for group membership, accounting for 44% of the variance, $R^2 = .44$.

Physical Abuse in an Earlier Adult Relationship.

Physical abuse in an earlier relationship was not significant in predicting group membership.

Sexual Abuse in an Earlier Adult Relationship.

Sexual Abuse in an Earlier relationship was also not significant in predicting group membership.

Results of a multiple regression analysis indicate that child sexual abuse is the best predictor of group membership, $R^2 = .45$. Child physical abuse was significantly correlated with child sexual abuse, $r = .52$. Therefore, it had almost no additional predictive power. Although, not significant, witnessing physical abuse as a child is the next best predictor of group membership, accounting for 42% of the variance. The next best predictor, but not significant, is the history of physical abuse in an earlier adult relationship, $R^2 = .42$. Sexual abuse in an earlier adult relationship was significantly correlated with physical abuse in an earlier adult relationship. Therefore, when considered in a multiple regression analysis with physical abuse in an earlier adult relationship, it had no predictive power, accounting for 0% of the variance. See Table 6 for a summary of results.

Subsidiary analyses were also conducted to examine the relationship between IBS scales, locus of causality, stability of causality, globality of causality, depression,

Table 6

Variance Accounted for by Abuse History in Predicting Group Membership

			Individual Linear Regression	
Variable	Model Chi-Square	df	R^2	Significant at 95%
Chsxab	6.46	1	.54	Yes
Chphab	5.06	1	.45	Yes
Witphab	4.14	1	.44	Yes
Phabearl	.19	1	.00	No
Sxabearl	.85	1	.00	No
			Multiple Linear Regression	
Variables	Model Chi-Square	df	R^2	Significant at 95%
Chsxab Chphab Witphab Phabearl Sxabearl	14.08	1	-	Yes
Chsxab	-	1	.46	Yes
Chphab	-	1	.00	No
Witphab	-	1	.42	No
Phabearl	-	1	.42	No
Sxabearl	-	1	.00	No

Note. for Table 6.

Chsxab = Childhood sexual abuse

Chphab = Childhood physical abuse

Witphab = Witnessed the abuse of someone in the home as a child

Phabearl = Physically abused in an earlier adult relationship

Sxabearl = Sexually abused in an earlier adult relationship

and conflict resolution means used by the women and their partners. Significant correlation coefficients >/= .60 for are presented in Table 7 in an inside-out correlation format and are reviewed in the following paragraphs. In addition, the correlation of depression to locus of causality, stability of causality, and globality of causality will be addressed. For a summary of correlations between all dependent measures in this study see Table A-1 in the appendix.

Results of a Pearson product moment correlation reveal that reasoning used by the participants during the course of disagreements with their partners (Reaspt) correlated significantly with the reasoning used by their partners (Reassp). Reaspt and Reassp are continuous scores derived from the CTS.

Passiveness was negatively correlated with assertion. Verbal Aggression (Vaggsp) used by the abusive men during the course of a disagreement with the women correlated significantly with Severe physical violence experienced by the women from their partners (Sviosp). Vaggsp also correlated significantly (negatively) with general assertion. Vaggsp and Sviosp are both continuous scores derived from the CTS. General assertion is a continuous score derived from the IBS.

A significant negative correlation was found between general assertion and Vaggsp. General assertion also correlated significantly (negative) with passive aggression and passiveness, two scales derived from the IBS.

The attributional reformulation of the learned helplessness model claims that depressive symptoms will correlate with an explanatory style that is internal, stable and global. However, in the present study depression as measured by the BDI did not

Table 7

Inside-Out Correlation Matrix of CTS and IBS Scales

	Variables						
Correlation	Reaspt	Passive	Reassp	Vaggsp	Sviosp	Sgr	Pa
=/>,+/- .8							
=/>, +/- .7	+ Reassp		+ Reaspt	+ Sviosp	+ Vaggsp		
=/>, =/- .6		- Sgr		- Sgr		- Vaggsp - Pa - Passive	- Sgr

Note. All correlations listed in this table are significant at $p<.05$.

Reaspt = Reasoning used by participant during the course of an argument with spouse (CTS score).

Note. (Continued from Table 7)

Vaggpt = Verbal aggression used by participant during the course of an argument with spouse (CTS score).

Reassp = Reasoning used by male partners during the course of an argument with women participants (CTS score).

Vaggsp = Verbal Aggression used by male partners during the course of an argument with women participants (CTS score).

Sviosp = Severe physical violence committed by male partners during the course of an argument with women participants (CTS score).

Sgr = General assertion of women participants when interacting with people (IBS scale).

Pa = Passive aggression behaviour of women participants when interacting with people (IBS scale).

Passive = the use of passive tendencies in interacting with people (IBS scale).

correlate significantly with internal locus of causality, globality of causality or stability of causality.

Due to insignificant findings in differences in general aggression in battered and nonbattered women (Research Question #2), differences in relationship specific aggression were investigated through examination of participants self-reports on the CTS. Results of independent t-tests indicate that battered and nonbattered women do differ significantly in verbal aggression, minor violence, and severe violence committed against their partners. Battered women reported using significantly more verbal aggression and committing more minor and severe violence against their partners than did nonbattered women. The t-scores were respectively, $t(28) = 2.95$, $p < .05$; $t(28) = 3.66$, $p < .05$; and $t(28) = 2.26$, $p < .05$.

Education and Group Membership

The results of an independent t-test indicate that a significant difference in education exists between the battered and nonbattered women, $t(28) = -3.94$, $p < .05$. Thus, the researcher examined the relationship of education to the dependent measures under consideration to see if they correlated more strongly with group membership or education. Correlations between dependent measures of $r >/= .60$ will be discussed. For a summary of correlations of $r >/= .4$ see inside - out correlation Table 8. No dependent variables correlated with education higher than $r = .5$. However, the continuous score of depression derived from the BDI, general assertion (a scale of the IBS), Sviosp, Mviosp, and Vaggsp (from the CTS) correlated significantly with group, $r =/> .6$.

Table 8

Inside-Out Correlation Table of Variables that Correlate Significantly with Education

Correlation	Variable: Education	Variable: Group
=/<, =/-.9		- Vaggsp
=/>,+/- .8		
=/>, +/-.7		- Mviosp
=/>, +/-.6		- BDI + Sgr - Sviosp
=/>, +/-.5	+ Group - Mviosp - Sviosp - Vaggsp	+ Educpt - Mviopt - Pa
=/>, +/-.4	- Mviopt + Sgr - Pa	- Vaggpt

*See Note for Table 7 for explanation of acronyms.

Summary

In summary, the results answered the research hypotheses and questions as follows; there does not appear to be a significant difference in general attributional style in battered and nonbattered women who participated in this study. Significant differences, however, do exist between the battered and nonbattered women in general assertion and passiveness. Examination of the results indicate that battered women are more commonly passive and less assertive than nonbattered women. No difference was found in general aggression levels in battered and nonbattered women. However, battered women were significantly more aggressive than nonbattered women in relationship specific contexts. Severe violence did not correlate with passiveness or general aggression. However, severe violence did correlate significantly (negative) with general assertion. In contrast to the prediction of the reformulated learned helplessness theory, depression did not correlate significantly with internal locus of causality, stability of causality or globality of causality. The abuse history variable that best predicts group membership is childhood sexual abuse and the weakest predictors are physical or sexual abuse in earlier relationships. The results revealed significant positive correlations between reasoning between partners in conflict resolution, and with verbal and severe physical violence committed by a man against his partner. General assertion correlated significantly (negative) with passiveness and verbal aggression committed by the male partners. Passive aggression correlated significantly (negative) with general assertion. A discussion of these results and the relationships revealed in post-hoc analyses will follow in the next chapter. In

addition, implications of the findings and shortcomings of the study will be addressed.

Chapter 5. Discussion

This chapter will discuss plausible hypotheses and implications of the results presented in the previous chapter. The discussion will be guided by learned helplessness and attribution theory. In addition, the relevance of recognition of battered women's psychological states and implications for future research are given.

The sample consisted of 30 women, 15 battered and 15 nonbattered from Edmonton, Alberta and outlying areas. The sample represented a wide range of socio-economic ranges and was predominantly Caucasian. Almost half of the battered women were unemployed compared to a quarter of the nonbattered group. The high unemployment rate among the battered group is slightly lower than reported in previous studies (57% in Fojtik, 1978; 65% in Hilberman & Munson, 1977; 72% in Snyder & Frutchman, 1981). An explanation for the higher employment rate in this group of battered women might be related to the changing roles of women. The studies reported were conducted approximately fifteen years ago when fewer women in general were employed. In addition, 60% of the battered women were divorced and 13% separated. Within the last year, many changes would have occurred in their lives. It might be interesting to examine if a higher percentage of the women were unemployed when they lived with their violent partners.

Twenty-seven percent of the battered women and 20% of nonbattered women reported being physically abused in a previous adult relationship. Likewise, 27% of battered women reported being sexually abused in a previous adult relationship. Thirteen percent of the nonbattered women reported sexual

abuse in a previous adult relationship. The forty percent of women in the battered group who reported being physically abused and 53% who reported being sexually abused as children are similar to that reported in other studies. Hilberman and Munson (1977) found that 50% of the women in their sample reported being abused as children and witnessing abuse in their homes. In the present study 47% of battered women and only 13% of nonbattered women reported witnessing abuse in their homes as children. Overall, the demographic characteristics of the present sample appear to be consistent with the literature on battered women. Unfortunately, no studies were available that separately reported abuse history for women involved in nonviolent relationships.

Research Question #1

Locus of Causality.

Analysis of differences in means in tendencies to attribute the locus of causality for negative hypothetical events on the EASQ as internal or external, although not statistically reliable, did reveal a trend toward battered women having a more internal locus of causality than nonbattered women.

Stability of Causality.

The results of an independent t-test also do not support the prediction that battered women would have a greater tendency to describe the causes of negative hypothetical events on the EASQ as stable than would nonbattered women.

Globality of Causality.

The results of an independent t-test do not support the prediction that battered women would have a greater tendency to describe the causes of negative hypothetical events on the EASQ as global more than nonbattered women.

Taken, together the results of the attributional analyses do not support the prediction that battered women would indicate the predisposition to describe the causes of negative hypothetical events as internal, stable, and global (pessimistic style). These results do not lend support to Abramson et. al (1978) and Miller & Norman's (1979) reformulation of Walker's (1979) application of the learned helplessness theory to battered women. Battered women did not indicate that they had less control over negative events in their lives, that they would persist over time, or that they would affect all areas of their lives more often than did nonbattered women. Although these results are not congruent with the reformulation of the learned helplessness theory regarding attribution theory, they are consistent with one of the only empirical studies that has compared battered and nonbattered women. Launius and Lindquist (1988) compared battered women (who had sought assistance from a shelter) and nonbattered women in their locus of control, but found that no significant differences were apparent. One explanation for the nonsignificance of the difference in Launius and Lindquist's study and the present investigation may be that the majority of the women in both battered groups had sought assistance regarding their relationships prior to participation in the research studies. Although no women in the present study had sought assistance from shelters, fourteen of the fifteen women in the battered group had sought assistance regarding their relationships from a professional--- police, clergy, counsellors, lawyers, physicians, women's groups. It is possible that many of these women, during the intervention process, were encouraged to recognize that the violence was not their fault, nor did they the cause the violence. Thus, it should be noted that if the results of the battered women in the present

study deviate from those of the larger population of battered women, the results should be interpreted with caution. It is possible that women still currently with their partners may have attributional styles that differ from those who have chosen to leave their partners and who have received counselling from professionals. In addition, it is possible that the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire is not sensitive to specific issues of control and outcome expectancy important in intimate relationships. It is also possible that the battered women, having left their violent relationships (instigating change), may have shown themselves that the abuse was not their fault and that change and new growth are possible. In any event, the current findings suggest that internal locus of causality, stability of causality and globality of causality, do not significantly differ in at least these groups of battered and nonbattered women.

Research Question #2

Assertion.

The results of a an independent t-test support the prediction that battered women would be significantly less assertive on the general assertion scale of the IBS than nonbattered women.

Passivity.

The results of Chi-square test for independence support the prediction that more battered than nonbattered women would be passive. The passiveness score is derived from the IBS and is indicative of general passivity and would therefore suggest general rather than situation-specific passive tendencies.

The findings that battered women are less assertive and are more commonly passive than nonbattered women are consistent with the descriptions

that several researchers have provided in their profiles of battered women (Ball & Wyman, 1978; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981; Walker, 1979; Symonds, 1979; Seligman, 1975). These results are also consistent with Telch and Lindquist's (1984) results when they examined assertion as part of a study designed to identify etiological characteristics of violent couples. They are, however, inconsistent with the findings of Launius and Lindquist (1988) regarding assertion. Launius and Lindquist did not find a significant difference in general assertion in battered and nonbattered women and suggested that assertion deficits may be situation-specific. This inconsistency leads to several intriguing hypotheses. The battered women in Lanius and Lindquist's (1988) study were residents of a shelter at the time they participated in the study. It is possible that their shelter experiences, may have involved assertion training and thus may have affected their general assertion levels. If this is the case, assertion training appears to have some affect. In the present study, however, battered women were significantly less assertive than nonbattered women. If the intervention process, as alluded to in the discussion on attributional style, did assist battered women changing their attributions, it does not appear to have had the same impact on general assertion or passiveness.

One explanation for the differences in general assertion and passiveness in battered and nonbattered women is that perhaps the type of intervention women in the present study had received did not focus on assertion teaching or other types of intervention methods that may be used by women's shelters. The women in the present study had only received short-term assistance from professionals who assisted them in leaving their partners. Few of the women had received extensive follow-up treatment.

Aggression.

The results of an independent t-test do not support the prediction that battered women would be significantly more aggressive on the IBS scale than would nonbattered women. It was hypothesized that battered women who are not assertive and who have become passive will tend to act out aggressively in response to their partner's violence. In general, however, battered women were not more aggressive than nonbattered women. This result appears to be inconsistent with Hedlund and Lindquist (1984) who reported that violent couples reported significantly more aggressive responses than satisfied (non-discordant) nonviolent couples. The difference between their study, however, and the present study is that in the present investigation only the women's general aggressiveness was assessed. Hedlund and Lindquist examined interspousal aggression. In post-hoc analyses battered women in this study according to their self-reports on the Conflict Tactics Scale, were significantly more verbally aggressive, and committed more minor and severely violent acts against their partners than nonbattered women. These results seem to support the hypothesis that battered women may tend to act out aggressively in response to their partner's violence. However, it should be noted that although differences between battered and nonbattered women's severely violent acts committed against their partners were significant, the severe violence that battered women committed against their partners did not correlate significantly with severe violence committed by the men. On the contrary, verbal aggression committed by the women against their partners did correlate significantly with male verbal aggression. These results suggest that if women act out aggressively in response to their partner's violence, their actions are

not as severe and are less likely to inflict physical harm than male aggression. See Table A-1 for a summary.

Research Question #3

Severe Violence and Passiveness.

The results of a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient do not support the prediction that severe violence would correlate positively with passiveness. This result does not lend support to the hypothesis proposed by the present researcher regarding learned helplessness. It was proposed that battered women who experienced more severe violence would be more passive than those experiencing only minor violence. Women who experienced minor violence were expected to make fewer behavioral attempts to stop the violence as compared to women experiencing severe violence. Therefore, according to Seligman's (1975) theory of learned helplessness, severe violence would lead women to greater levels of passivity because in making strong behavioral attempts to stop the violence, they might decide that the violence was uncontrollable. A few possible explanations for the lack of the support of this hypotheses are apparent. All but three women in the battered group had severe violence committed against them by their partners. Thus, it was difficult to detect a correlation within the group because the battered group was too homogeneous. In addition, it is possible that if these battered women did make strong behavioral attempts to stop the severe violence, that they met with success. Thus, they felt in control rather than passive.

Interestingly, although passiveness was not correlated with severe violence committed by the men, it did correlate significantly (negative) with general assertion. This result is consistent with those of Rosenbaum and O'Leary (1981)

and Telch and Lindquist (1984) when they found that abused women indicated fewer assertive tendencies than "satisfactorily" married women. This relationship could suggest that as frequency of severely violent acts by a male against his female partner increases, women become less assertive. Of, course this relationship may also suggest that the less assertive a woman is the more likely she is to be abused severely by her partner. The first explanation, however, seems more probable and is consistent with Learned Helplessness theory.

Post-hoc analysis

Two final types of subsidiary analyses were undertaken. First, a regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive power for group membership of five abuse variables from the demographic questionnaire (child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, witnessing the abuse of someone at home as children, physical abuse in an earlier adult relationship and sexual abuse in an earlier adult relationship). Second, a correlation matrix was created to examine unhypothesized relationships between dependent variables.

The results of a multiple regression analysis indicate that child sexual abuse is a significant predictor and most powerfully predicts group membership out of the five variables. The next best predictor in the multiple regression analyses was witnessing the physical abuse of someone at home as a child was the next best predictor, but it was not significant. In individual regression analyses, child sexual abuse, child physical abuse and witnessing the abuse of someone in at home as a child were significant predictors. The results of this study contribute to the contradictory results that researchers have revealed in examining battered women's abuse histories. The results appear to lend support to the social learning theory. A

positive relationship between witnessing marital violence and being abused as a child, and then becoming involved an abusive relationship as an adult has been found.

Correlations in the matrix revealed interesting results that are consistent with the reciprocity theory of relationships. Significant correlations were found between reasoning used by participant and reasoning used by partners (from CTS) during the course of a disagreement. These results indicate that the more reasoning used by one marital partner, the more reasoning used by the other and the opposite of this. This result could be interpreted to suggest that the positive interaction tendencies of one partner can influence the behaviour of the other partner. Caution should be used, however, in interpreting this result so that blame for male violence will not be attributed to women. Verbal aggression by the men (from CTS) correlated significantly with severely violent behavior committed by the men (from CTS). This correlation seems obvious, but is still important. If in future research it is found that verbal aggression precipitates severely violent behaviour committed by men, it could be used as a warning sign of physical violence later. Verbal aggression committed by the men correlated negatively with general assertion. This relationship probably suggests that verbal aggression may discourage women and lead them to be unassertive. However, in reality, it is unclear whether less assertive women become involved with verbally abusive men or if the relationship works the other way. Assertion (from IBS) was negatively correlated with passive aggression (from IBS). This relationship may indicate that rather than being assertive, battered women become passive aggressive. However,

again what variable precipitates the other cannot be determined from correlational results.

It should be noted that a significant difference in depression according to self-report on the BDI between battered and nonbattered women was revealed. However, depression was not correlated with an attributional style that was internal, global and stable as would be purported by Peterson and Seligman (1984). Small sample size and the possible affects of intervention on attribution may account for this inconsistency. In addition, few women in the study were in the severe clinical depression range. Thus variance in scores may have been too insignificant to reveal a relationship between attributional style and depression. In addition, in future investigations it would be worthy to compare women's attributional styles to relevant life events with their general attributional style as derived by their responses to the questions on the Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire. It is possible that depression would be more strongly related to specific attributions regarding actual life events and experiences.

Education and Group Membership

As described previously in the section on demographic characteristics of participants, differences in education between the battered and nonbattered groups are significant. Analyses of a correlation matrix indicates that although education does correlate significantly with group membership, the dependent variables of most interest in the study, correlate more strongly with group than with education level of the participant. It simply appears that in this study, battered women have fewer years of education than do nonbattered women.

Summary

This study has examined differences between battered and nonbattered women's attributional styles, assertion, aggression, and passive tendencies. In addition, levels of depression, means of interaction used during conflict, and demographic variables were compared. The results of this study have produced much information and many directions for further study. Though battered women were less assertive and more commonly passive than nonbattered women, they were not significantly different than nonbattered women on any of the three dimensions of attributional style or in general aggression. In future research, it would be interesting to examine if passiveness or assertion deficits would be related to actual problem-solving deficits as would be expected from the learned helplessness theory. Results of such a study may examine the relationship between cognitive variables or psychological states and behaviour. In addition, it would be fruitful to measure attributional style as it relates to actual life events. The Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire was hypothetical in nature and was developed using a university population. It is therefore, possible that many of the events presented on the questionnaire were not relevant to the women's experiences. This would probably hold true particularly of the battered group as they reported completing significantly fewer years of formal education than did the comparison group. If significant differences are found in attributional style regarding relevant life events, than a more specific explanation for why battered women remain in abusive relationships may be possible. Attributional style may be examined as a situation-specific tendency rather than as a global style. At this point, however, it seems reasonable to conclude from the results of this study that

battered women are more often passive, less assertive and have higher depression scores than nonbattered women.

An interesting pattern that seems to have surfaced from the data is the reciprocal relationship between conflict resolution strategies used by the women and their partners during the course of disagreements. These results do not attribute blame to battered women but do suggest that battered women's responses to their partner's are related to their partner's behaviour toward them. Thus, conflict resolution strategy teaching may be beneficial in helping men and women in reducing verbal aggression and physical aggression within their own relationships.

The major limitations in the present study are shared by most research involving battered women. The small sample size and the fact that the fourteen of the fifteen women in the battered group had already left their partners, limits the generalizability of the findings to battered women who have not left their abusive relationships. As well, the sample consisted of volunteers. It is probable that battered women who volunteer in such a research study may differ from those women who do not. In addition, unfortunately, the results are based on self-report and are only from the female perspective. These samples do, however, provide helpful and consequential information, and should be followed by larger, more representative samples.

The present study does verify the need for research directed at determining which variables differentiate battered from nonbattered women. Understanding only the relationships of battered women does not provide interventionists with a blueprint for teaching or counselling. Examining differences in violent and

nonviolent relationships may magnify the disrespectful social behaviours used by many intimate partners. This exposure may lead to a challenging of the social norms that may accept violence and maltreatment in intimate relationships. Moreover, examining nonviolent relationships will expose to the public healthy modes of interaction between intimate partners. It is this examiners opinion that health professionals should begin to examine "healthy" interactions between intimate partners.

In summary, the findings of this study provide further support for the assessment of assertion, passiveness, and relationship-specific aggression as part of intervention programs for domestic violence. Moreover, it provides a beginning to theory that might be used in educating adolescents regarding what type of behaviours may be warnings of violence in the future. The results indicate that at least within conflict situations, male verbal aggression is associated with physical violence. This information, if expanded upon, may be used to further educate society regarding the relationship of what might seem to be "harmless" verbal aggression and physical violence. Of course, however, this correlational research cannot suggest the order of the relationship between verbal aggression and physical violence. Future research might examine if verbal aggression is actually a warning that physical violence is a threat in the future. Regardless, it is clear that further research is needed that focuses on prevention and the conception of healthy interactions within intimate relationships.

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Appendix A.

Table A-1. Correlation Coefficients for EASQ, IBS, CTS, and BDI scores

Table A-1

Correlation Coefficients for EASQ, IBS, CTS, and BDI Scores

	Internal	Global	Stable	Reaspt	Reassp	Vaggpt	Vaggsp	Sviopt	Sviosp	Pa
Internal	1.00	-	-	-.41*	-.31	-	.30	-	.34	.47*
Global		1.00	-	-	-	-	.33	-	-	-
Stable			1.00	-	-	-	-	-	.33	.33
Reaspt				1.00	.74*	-	-	-	-	-
Reassp					1.00	-	-.40*	-	-.40*	-
Vaggpt						1.00	.48*	-	.33	.40*
Vaggsp							1 .00	.36*	.70*	.41*
Sviopt								1.00	.34	-
Sviosp									1.00	.30
Pa										1.00

Table A-1 (Continued)

Correlation Matrix of Dependent Measures from EASQ, IBS, CTS, and BDI

	Ggr	Sgr	Passive	Bdi
Internal	.42*	-.33	-	-
Global	-	-	-	-
Stable	.34	-	-	-
Reaspt	-	-	-	-
Reassp	-	-	-.47*	-
Vaggpt	-	-.39*	-	-
Vaggsp	-	-.66*	.48*	.59*
Sviopt	.36*	-.32	-	-
Sviosp	-	-.46*	-	-
Pa	.44*	-.64*	-	.57*
Ggr	1.00	-	-	-
Sgr		1.00	-.66*	-.47*
Passive			1.00	-
Bdi				1.00

Note. for Table A-1

(EASQ scales) Internal = locus of causality; Stable = stability of causality; Global = globality of causality

(CTS Scales) Reaspt = Participant Reasoning; Vaggpt = Participant Verbal Aggression; Mviopt = Participant Minor Violence; Sviopt = Participant Severe Violence; Reassp = Male Partner Reasoning; Vaggsp = Male partner Verbal Aggression; Mviosp = Male Partner Minor Violence; Sviosp = Male Partner Severe Violence.

(IBS Scales) Ggr = General Aggression; Sgr = General Assertion; Pa = Passive Aggression; Passive = Passiveness

BDI = depression

* significant at $p<.05$

Appendix B. Letter to Counsellors, Women's Groups, and Professors

Jennifer MacDonald
10531-71 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E OX2

Dear _____,

I am a graduate student in the Counselling Department at the University of Alberta and I am currently working on my Master's thesis. I am interested in conducting a research project examining some of the psychological variables that may influence intentions made by women who find themselves to be victims of domestic violence. In order to do so, I will need to have access to women who have been in abusive relationships within the past year. I hope that you will be interested in allowing me to present my project to some of the women associated with the YWCA.

My volunteer role as co-facilitator of a support group for children and special research studies work at a home for women and children from violent homes, has played an integral part in my interest in counselling and researching in the area of relationship violence. As a counsellor, I recognize the primary importance of emphasizing environmental factors in dealing with women who are abused in their relationships. By this I mean providing shelters and resources so that women can feel they have alternatives, support, and safety as they begin to rebuild their lives. However, I have recognized that emphasis on environmental factors alone is not always adequate. A question that has beset me since beginning work at the shelter has been "Why upon exiting the shelter do so many women return to their abusive situations?" Peretti and Buchanan (1978) reported that even among women who have chosen to escape abuse for the safety of shelters, as many as 60% returned to their relationships. Similarly, Snyder and Fruchtman (1981) reported that six to ten weeks after leaving the shelter 60% of 119 women returned to their abusive relationships. Although these women were provided with tangible resources that would allow them to live independently, they often returned to their abusive situations. It seems that resource assistance alone may ignore the overpowering psychological and social consequences suffered by victims of domestic violence.

My Master's thesis serves to investigate the role of psychological variables within violent relationships. This study is one of the first empirical tests of the theory of causal attributions of victims of violence that uses a comparison group and has as its major purpose to discriminate between psychological attributional characteristics of battered and nonbattered women. Briefly, causal attributions refer to the explanations individuals construct for their own behavior and the behavior of others. The concept of attributions is currently receiving considerable attention and it has become apparent to me that we must understand "How blame attributions influence the affective and behavioral responses of battered women?" Some analysts maintain that internal attributions may be adaptive for survivors of violence as a way of maintaining control over their lives. Others purport that

internal attributions contribute to chronic learned helplessness. I wish to investigate the role of attributions in women's intentions to return to their partners so that we may better meet the needs of battered women. My experience in working with people involved in relationship violence has been that women are most often the partners who are seeking to eliminate the violence. For this reason, although it is apparent that relationship violence is a larger social and political problem, my goal is to enhance intervention programs to empower female partners.

What I am proposing to do is to administer various questionnaires and to conduct brief interviews with women who have been involved in violent relationships. The questionnaires will focus on attributional styles, conflict response, assertiveness and aggressiveness, depression and demographic factors. I will use this information to try to discriminate women involved in violent relationships from those involved in nonviolent relationships. The results of this research will assist in the development of intervention programs for battered women.

I realize that time is valuable and I have arranged this project so that it will require minimal time. I would require approximately two hours in interviewing each woman. Those women who consent to participate will be given a packet containing five questionnaires to be filled out. They will also be provided with information concerning resource assistance available for women involved in violent relationships. In addition, I will be available to meet with anyone who has further questions or who requires further assistance. Upon completion of the study, I will share the final results with you and I am willing to discuss the implications of the results and how they might influence future research and intervention programs for battered women.

This project will be supervised by my Master's committee, the chairperson of which is Dr. Gerard Kysela. Dr. Kysela is a faculty member in the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Alberta and is a licensed psychologist.

I appreciate the time you have taken to consider this matter and hope that you will be interested in assisting us with this research. A draft of the research proposal can be made available to you if you so request. I will call you within the next week to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. If you would like to speak with me before then, I can be reached at the numbers listed below.

Sincerely,

Jennifer MacDonald

Home: (403) 438-0206
Voice Mail: (403) 988-4189

Appendix D. Participant Consent Form

University of Alberta
Human Participants' Consent Form

Title of Research Proposal: Attributional Style, Aggression, Assertion, and Passiveness in Battered and Nonbattered Women

Principal Investigator: Jennifer MacDonald (403) 438-0206
Department: Educational Psychology
Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Gerard M. Kysela (403) 492-5026

I. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY require us to obtain your signed consent for the performance of investigative procedures. After reading the statement in II below, please indicate your permission to participate by your signature.

II. STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE (brief description of the procedure, benefit, duration, and known risks):

We are investigating the role of "causal attributions" in relationship violence to broaden the knowledge in this field so that professionals involved will be better able to assist individuals who find themselves in abusive relationships. Causal attributions refer to the process by which individuals explain and interpret events that occur in their lives. We would like you to fill out five short questionnaires. One questionnaire explores your causal attributions. Two other questionnaires investigate the way you behave when interacting with people. A fourth questionnaire assesses the way you are presently feeling and a final questionnaire asks you to respond to factual questions concerning yourself, your partner and your family. There is a minimal risk that some of the items in the questionnaires may cause you some discomfort. If this occurs, a staff member from the university will be available to speak with you. A benefit of the questionnaires is that they may provide you with an opportunity to bring your current situation into focus. All of the information from the questionnaires will be kept in complete confidence. The information shall be used to develop support and resources for women involved in abusive relationships. The questionnaires should take approximately two and one half hours to complete.

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THE STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE AND AGREE TO BE A PARTICIPANT IN THE RESEARCH DESCRIBED ABOVE. MY PARTICIPATION IS GIVEN VOLUNTARILY AND I UNDERSTAND THAT I MAY TERMINATE MY SERVICE AT ANY TIME. I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I AM AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE.

Name of Participant (print) _____Signature of Participant_____

Appendix E. Beck Depression Inventory

Note. This measure has been excluded from the final copy of this thesis due to copyright restrictions. (See reference: Beck, Ward, Mendolsohn, Mock, & Edinbaugh, 1961)

Appendix F. Interpersonal Behavior Survey

Note. This measure has been excluded from the final copy of this thesis due to copyright restrictions. (See reference: Mauger & Adkinson, 1987)

Appendix G. Conflict Tactics Scale

THE CONFLICT TACTICS SCALES, COUPLE FORM R*

ASK IN SEQUENCE Q35a Q36a AND (IF NEVER ON BOTH Q35a AND Q36a) ASK Q37a. THEN ASK Q35b, Q36B AND (IF NEVER ON BOTH Q35b AND Q36b) ASK Q37B, ETC. Q35. No matter how well a couple get along, there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with the other person, or just have spats or fights because they're in a bad mood or tired or for some other reason. They also use many different ways of trying to settle their differences. I'm going to read some things that you and your (spouse/partner) might do when you have an argument. I would like you to tell me how many times (Once, Twice, 3-5 times, 6-10 times, 11-20 times, or more than 20 times) in the past 12 months you (READ ITEM)

	Q35. Respondent In Past Year 1 = Once 2 = Twice 3 = 3-5 Times 4 = 6-10 Times 5 = 11-20 Times 6 = More than 20 0 = Never(don't read)	Q36. Spouse In Past Year 1 = Once 2 = Twice 3 = 3-5 Times 4 = 6-10 Times 5 = 11-20 Times 6 = More than 20 0 = Never(don't read)	Q37. For items marked "Never" on both Q35 and Q36 Has it Ever happened? 1 = Yes 0 = No
A. Discussed an issue calmly	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
B. Got information to back up your/his/her side of things	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
C. Brought in, or tried to bring in, someone to help settle things	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
D. Insulted or swore at him/her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
E. Sulked or refused to talk about an issue	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
F. Stomped out of the room or house or yard	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
G. Cried	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
H. Did or said something to spite him/her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
I. Threatened to hit or throw something at him/her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
J. Threw or smashed or hit or kicked something	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
K. Threw something at him /her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
L. Pushed, Grabbed, or shoved him/her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
M. Slapped him/her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
N. Kicked, bit, or hit him/her /you with a fist	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
O. Hit or tried to hit him/her /you with something	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
P. Beat him/her/you up	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
Q. Choked him/her/you	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
R. Threatened him/her/you with a knife or gun	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0
S. Used a knife or fired a gun	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 0	1 0

* See Straus 1989 for versions to measure other family role relationships, e.g. parent-child.

Appendix H. Expanded Attributional Style Questionnaire

Note. This measure has been excluded from the final copy of this thesis due to copyright restrictions. (See reference: Peterson and Villanova, 1988).

Appendix I. Demographic Questionnaire

Participant ID _____ Date of Birth _____

Please answer each question by circling the letter that corresponds to your answer.

1. What is the last year of school that you have completed? Please specify the exact grade level _____ and circle the category.
   a. 8 or less
   b. some high school
   c. finished high school
   d. some college
   e. finished technical or business school
   f. finished college with bachelors degree
   g. graduate courses
   h. other (please specify) _____

2. Are you employed?
   a. yes
   b. no

3. If you have a job, what is your annual income?
   Please specify income _____ and circle category.
   a. not employed
   b. $0-$5,000
   c. $5,001-$10,000
   d. $10,001-$15,000
   e. $15,001-$20,000
   f. $20,001-$25,000
   g. $25,001-$30,000
   h. $30,001-$40,000
   i. more than $40,000

4. If you have a job, how long have you been working at that job?
   a. not employed
   b. less than 6 months
   c. 6-12 months
   d. 1-3 years
   e. 4-6 years
   f. more than 6 years

5. What is the last year of school that your husband/partner completed?
   Please specify grade level _____ and circle category.
   a. 8 or less
   b. some high school
   c. finished high school
   d. some college
   e. finished technical or business school
   f. finished college with bachelors degree
   g. graduate courses
   h. other (please specify) _____

6. Is your husband/partner employed?
   a. yes
   b. no

7. If he has a job, what is his annual income?
   Please specify income _____ and circle category.
   a. not employed
   b. $0-$5,000
   c. $5,001-$10,000
   d. $10,001-$15,000
   e. $15,001-$20,000
   f. $20,001-$25,000
   g. $25,001-$30,000
   h. $30,001-$40,000
   i. more than $40,000

8. If he has a job, how long has he been working at that job?
   a. not employed
   b. less than 6 months
   c. 6-12 months
   d. 1-3 years
   e. 4-6 years
   f. more than 6 years

9. Where does most of your family income come from?
   a. husband/partner's job
   b your job
   c. Social Services (please specify) _____
   d. other (please specify) _____

10. Do you get child support or alimony from an earlier relationship?
    a. yes
    b. no

11. If so, how much do you get per week?
    a. I don't receive any
    b. $1-$10
    c. $11-$20
    d. $21-$30
    e. $31-$40
    f. $41-$50
    g. more than $50.00

12. What race are you?
    a. Caucasian
    b. Black
    c. Asian
    d. Hispanic
    e. other (please specify) _____

13. What religious denomination are you?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. other (please specify) _____
    e. None

14. Do you currently practice your religion?
    a. yes
    b. no

15. What religion was practiced by your family while you were growing up?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. other (please specify) _____
    e. None

16. Do you think your religious beliefs influence your decisions concerning your present relationship?
    a. yes
    b. no

17. What is your husband/partner's race?
    a. Caucasian
    b. Black
    c. Asian
    d. Hispanic
    e. other (please specify) _____

18. What denomination is your husband/partner.
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. other (please specify) _____
    e. None

19. Does your husband/partner currently practice his religion?
    a. yes
    b. no

20. What religion did your husband/partner's family practice while he was growing up?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. other (please specify) _____
    e. None

21. What is your marital status?
    a. married
       How long have you been married to your husband?
       _____
    b. cohabiting
       How long have you been co-habiting with your partner?_____
    c. divorced
       How long have you been divorced? _____
    d. separated
       How long have you been separated? _____

22. If you are or were married, how long did you know your husband before you were married? Please specify length of time _____ and circle the category.
    a. less than 3 months
    b. 3-6 months
    c. 7-12 months
    d. 13 months-3 years
    e. 4-6 years
    f. more than 6 years

23. If you are not married, how long did you know your partner before cohabiting? Please specify length of the relationship _____ and circle the category.
    a. less than 3 months
    b. 3-6 months
    c. 7-12 months
    d. 13 months-3 years
    e. 4-6 years
    f. more than 6 years

24. How old were you when you started seeing your partner? _____

25. How many times have you left your partner? Please specify the number of times _____ and circle the category.
    a. none
    b. once
    c. twice
    d. 3-4 times
    e. 5-6 times
    f. more than 6 times

26. How many children do you have from your present relationship?
    a. none
    b. 1
    c. 2
    d. 3
    e. 4
    f. 5
    g. 6
    h. more than 6

27. Do these children live with you and your husband/partner?
    a. we have no children
    b. yes
    c. no
    d. other (please specify) _____

28. How many children do you have from earlier marriages or relationships?
    a. 0
    b. 1
    c. 2
    d. 3
    e. 4
    f. 5
    g. 6
    h. more than 6

29. Do these children live with you and your husband/partner?
    a. no children from an earlier relationship
    b. yes
    c. no
    d. other (please specify) _____

30. How many times have you been married?
    a. 0
    b. 1
    c. 2
    d. 3
    e. 4
    f. more than 4

31. How many times have you cohabited?
    a. 0
    b. 1
    c. 2
    d. 3
    e. 4
    f. more than 4

32. Were you physically abused in a previous dating or marriage relationship?
    a. yes
    b. no

33. As a child, were you physically abused or punished so that you had cuts or bruises?
    a. yes
    b. no

34. If so, who abused you? Circle as many as apply to you.
    a. father
    b. mother
    c. stepfather
    d. stepmother
    e. other (please specify) _____

35. As a child, did you witness physical abuse of someone other than yourself (in your home)?
    a. yes
    b. no

36. If so, who was physically abused?
    a. father
    b. mother
    c. sister(s)
    d. brother(s)
    e. stepfather
    f. stepmother
    f. other (please specify) _____

37. Who was the abuser? Circle those that apply.
    a. no one was abused
    b. father
    c. mother
    d. stepfather
    e. stepmother
    f. other (please specify) _____

38. Has your present husband/partner been physically abusive to you?
    a. yes
    b. no

If you answered yes to question #38 proceed to question #39. If you answered no, proceed to question #41.

39. How long has your husband/partner been physically abusive to you? Please specify length of time _____ and specify category.
    a. less than 6 months
    b. 6-12 months
    c. 13 months-3 years
    d. 4-6 years
    e. 7-10 years
    f. 11-15 years
    g. more than 15 years

40. As a result of the abuse by your husband towards you which of following have you experienced? (Circle as many as apply).
    a. cuts
    b. bruises
    c. concussion
    d. broken bones
    e. an injury for which you had to go to the hospital
    f. none of the above
    g. other (please specify) _____

41. Were you sexually abused in a previous dating or marriage relationship?
    a. yes
    b. no

42. As a child, were you sexually abused?
    a. yes
    b. no

43. If so, who abused you? Circle as many as apply to you.
    a. father
    b. mother
    c. stepfather
    d. stepmother
    e. other (please specify) _____

44. Do you love your husband/partner?
    a. yes
    b. no
    c. not sure

45. Is there something that was not included in the questionnaire that you feel should be included? Please feel free to comment.